

Commute & Recreation

Lower Guadalupe River Trail
along San José Norman Y. Mineta International Airport

**55% of users
are commuting regularly
to Silicon Valley companies**

The **Guadalupe River Trail** is 9 miles long and extends from downtown San José to the San Francisco Bay. Nearly 7 miles of the trail system were recently paved from Interstate 880 to the Bay. The trail travels besides San José International Airport (SJC) and many of Silicon Valley's largest employers.

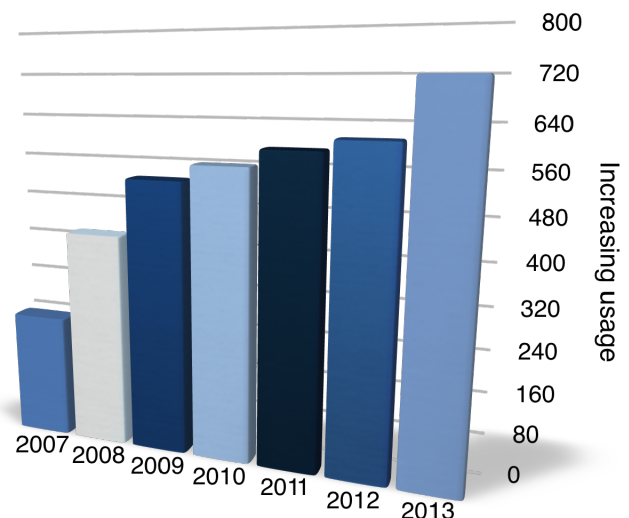
The newly paved trail is entirely "off street" and includes grade-separated under-crossings at two freeways, one County Expressway and four major City roadways.

The pavement project cost was approximately \$3.5M and was officially opened to the public on April 22, 2013. It represents a significant investment by the Federal Government through its SAFETEA-LU (Transportation Bill) program.

Usage data has been collected for the past 7 years and documents

over 1,000 trail users daily, with three count stations measuring between 700 and 1,100 users each. The table to the right shows the continuously increasing level of travel at the Coleman Avenue Count Station only.

The trail provides an all-weather surface that facilitates commuting by bicycle to the many Silicon Valley businesses along the riparian corridor. The trail also connects to the Guadalupe Gardens and Park (250 acres) and Downtown San José. The project's great location is seen as an economic development and recruitment tool and supports tourism with its proximity to the nearby convention center and downtown hotels. The trail supports healthy commuting,



and leads visitors and residents to great attractions.

Design Challenges

The paved trail project included technical and design challenges that were resolved by a comprehensive master plan before any design work got underway. The trail is constructed mostly along an existing gravel maintenance road on top of a levee under the US Army Corps of Engineers.



San José Trail Program
www.sjparks.org/trails





To maintain the levee's integrity, no excavation occurred. The trail's surface allows for sheet flow of storm water runoff to eliminate erosive concentrated flows. The trail was designed to Class I trail standards and met minimum vertical clearance requirements while minimizing impacts to the flood protection function. The various trailheads along the alignment were designed to accommodate loading and the horizontal clearance requirement for SCVWD maintenance vehicles. Trail construction activities were coordinated with Airport staff to minimize impacts to the airport's operations.

Focus on Design

The trail project included trail amenities including a public plaza, decorative pavement gateways, pavement markings and themed

interpretive signage. The interpretive features centered on unique local themes:

- **Airport Trailhead.** Pavement treatments and public art focused on the science of flight and history of the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport. The 45' diameter plaza is a popular venue to watch planes land and take off from the airport; the closest proximity to an international runway within the US.
- **Trimble Road Trailhead.** A Columbian mammoth fossil was discovered near this location during excavation activities related to the SCVWD's Guadalupe River Flood Protection Project. A piece of artwork has been commissioned to represent the ancient history and former animal inhabitants of this area. This trailhead was designed and constructed to accommodate the future 12-foot tall by 18-foot long sculpture. An informational display about the discovery is already in place at the trailhead.
- **Gold Street Trailhead.** Directional and interpretive signage at this location commemorates the unique culture and history of the Alviso community.
- **Additional features.** Highly reflective striping and energy-efficient lighting at under-crossings permit 24/7 use of the trail system. Mileage markers at ¼-mile intervals are reference points for the city's 911 Center, and help to speed emergency services and data collection.



Airport Trailhead



Street entrance